

REMARKS

The Applicant thanks the Examiner for indicating that claims 27-29 are allowed while claims 15-18 and 22-25 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

The drawings are objected to for the reasons noted in the official action. All of the raised drawing objections are believed to be overcome by the requested drawing amendments. The accompanying New Replacement Sheet of formal drawings incorporate all of the requested drawing amendments. If any further amendment to the drawings is believed necessary, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned representative of the Applicant to discuss the same.

Paragraph [026] of the specification has been amended to more clearly denote the features that were previously disclosed in the original specification and to which the above drawing amendments are directed. Fig.3 shows a locking segment 5 having ears 13, into which according to paragraph [026] of the description "after locking of the segments 5 corresponding safety pins can be introduced to additionally lock the locking position mechanically". At the end of the ears 13 in the center of the square, a big black circle shows bearing eyes into which a locking pin is introduced. The bearing eyes 35 now recited in amended paragraph [026] were disclosed at least in paragraph [018] of the original specification which also supports the above remarks. As such the undersigned avers that the newly amended paragraph of the specification does not contain any new subject matter.

Claims 14 and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, for the reasons noted in the official action. The inadequate written description rejection is acknowledged and respectfully traversed in view of the following remarks.

Claims 14 and 19 have been amended and are believed to overcome all of the 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph rejections. If any further amendment to the claims is believed

necessary, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned representative of the Applicant to discuss the same.

Claims 14, 19-21, and 26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for the reasons noted in the official action. The rejected claims are accordingly amended, by the above claim amendments, and the presently pending claims are now believed to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter regarded as the invention, thereby overcoming all of the raised § 112, second paragraph, rejections. The entered claim amendment are directed solely at overcoming the raised 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph rejection and are not directed at distinguishing the present invention from the art of record in this case.

If any further amendment to this application is believed necessary to advance prosecution and place this case in allowable form, the Examiner is courteously solicited to contact the undersigned representative of the Applicant to discuss the same.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the raised rejection(s) should be withdrawn and this application is now placed in a condition for allowance. Action to that end, in the form of an early Notice of Allowance, is courteously solicited by the Applicant at this time.

The Applicant respectfully requests that any outstanding objection(s) or requirement(s), as to the form of this application, be held in abeyance until allowable subject matter is indicated for this case.

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In the event that there are any fee deficiencies or additional fees are payable, please charge the same or credit any overpayment to our Deposit Account (Account No. 04-0213).

Respectfully submitted,



Jay S. Franklin, Reg. No. 54,105

Customer No. 020210

Davis & Bujold, P.L.L.C.

112 Pleasant Street

Concord, NH 03301-2931

Telephone 603-226-7490

Facsimile 603-226-7499

E-mail: patent@davisandbujold.com